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Stark County Law Library Association

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BEGINNERS

www.virtualchase.com

If you read the Stark County Law Library Blawg <<http://temp.starklawlibrary.org/blog/>>, you will no doubt have noticed that I read her TVC Alert e-newsletter faithfully and usually find something there worth passing on to my readers.

The email address, info@starklawlibrary.org really works! TRY IT!!

The Virtual Chase website began helping legal professionals with research skills as far back as 1996. A look at the Wayback Machine <http://web.archive.org/web/*/http://virtualchase.com> will show it's progression from what started as a hobby and gradually developed into one of the best legal research assistance sites on the Web.

Don't be fooled by the fact that the Index page contains only two subject headings - "Internet Research" and "Research Guides." There is a wealth of information in those two categories and Genie Tyburski does a great job of organizing them, rendering the material very user-friendly.

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Besides the newsletter, the Internet Research section includes the following sub-topics: "Research Articles," "How To Research," "Questions & Answers," "Information

Quality," "Presentations," "Research Skills," "Research Tips," and a section "For Internet Trainers."

Under Research Guides you will find information on finding "Company Information", doing "Legal Research", the "People Finder", and lots of information about "Search Engines."

What people say about Virtual Chase:

"The Virtual Chase [is] a site packed with Internet research advice."

~PC World, April 2004, pg. 7

"I find your articles and analysis to be among the best available in the field of Net legal Research. Keep up the good work."

~Thomas Carr, Analyst,
Library of Congress

"[The Virtual Chase] has become ... a central stop for information seekers from all walks of life."

~Marylaine Block, The
CyberSkeptic's Guide, May
2003 ¹

INTERMEDIATE

VoIP - Part III

Last month dealt with how VoIP (voice over Internet Protocol) benefits the lawyer. This month will discuss VoIP's benefits for the firm. "The law office always benefits when its lawyers are more efficient and productive. But there are also direct benefits... for the firm" ²

Helping to improve the firm's productivity is the auto attendant feature of most VoIP systems. It performs like a virtual 24/7 receptionist, greeting callers and routing calls according to each lawyer's preset call forwarding priorities. Some systems provide built-in security features that recognize the firm's lawyers by voice and provide them with preset access to office networked information and the lawyer's personal database.

The "bottom line" is one place VoIP really excels. The return in cost savings includes the most obvious, by-passing long distance carriers via the free Internet, particularly for international calls, and in MAC's - moves, adds and changes to phone extensions, which can save big bucks when summer associates begin/end work.

In the areas of troubleshooting and repairing, VoIP systems "can be enabled for remote diagnostics and repair, which means faster response and less costly repairs." ³ Programming changes can also be made remotely and take place in the background so your system is not disrupted.

A reduction in IT administration costs is another cost benefit of VoIP. Traditional systems require two sets of cable wires, one for phone service and another for the computer. Because VoIP uses the same network for both voice and data, the firm will cut its wiring cost in half, and at \$.50/foot these savings add up quickly. A large firm will probably be able to reduce its IT staff as well, having only one network to manage. "One other saving is space. Not only do you minimize the number of servers, but each one is smaller (about the size of a DVD player) than the traditional microwave sized boxes." ⁴

Fact: VoIP is an up-and-coming advancement in technology and it can save your firm money!!



ADVANCED

Computer Security - Part II

To Do List:

First, identify the exploiter, then close the hole.

Last month's Advanced column enumerated ways to determine if your computer has been exploited by spyware. If after reading the article, you think "your computer HAS been exploited, or if you fear it's been exploited but aren't quite sure," ⁵ this month will discuss what actions you should take now to restore your computer to good health.

1. The first thing that you need to do is to identify the exploiter. Easier said than done.
 - Begin by updating your anti-virus software's definitions, then scan your hard drive.
 - If the anti-virus can't nail it down, update your anti-spyware definitions and scan again.
 - If, heaven forbid, you don't have an anti-spyware program - GET ONE! Go to <<http://www.firewallguide.com/spyware.htm>> and peruse their "Spyware Protection & Removal" page containing links to articles and comparative reviews of anti-spyware products to find and remove spyware, to block installation of spyware and to stop spyware from "phoning home." Be sure to carefully check out the anti-spyware you are considering purchasing since there are rogue anti-spyware programs out there that are actually spyware! Here is a partial listing:
 - 2004 Adware/Spyware Remover & Blocker

ADS Adware Remover
AdWare SpyWare Blocker & Removal
AdwareX Eliminator
Privacy Tools 2004
SpyBeware
The Web Shield ⁶

- If your anti-virus and anti-spyware don't come up with anything, write down your symptoms and search Google and either the Apple or Microsoft Knowledge Base for causes and cures. Chances are pretty good that you aren't the only one with this problem.
- 2. Next you need to close the hole. This one is relatively simple once you know what your problem is. Just go to the manufacturer's web site and apply the appropriate patch.
 - Patching Windows is usually a snap because they automatically send out a "Critical Update" notice as soon as they have a new patch ready, but it is always a good idea to manually check each week by going to Start > Windows Update.
 - Apple also has a built-in operating system update. Go to the Apple menu > Software Update. To get Apple's updates manually, choose System Preferences from the Apple menu, choose Software Update from the View menu, click Update Now. In the Software Update window, select the items you want to install, then click Install.

ADVANCED

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- To patch Microsoft Office, including Word, Power Point, Access, Outlook, Front Page, etc., go to <http://officeupdate.microsoft.com/>, then click on "Check for Updates." The Mac version of Office is at <http://microsoft.com/mac/downloads.aspx>.
- To manually patch software, open a program like Adobe Acrobat, go to Help > About... and write down the exact version number of your program (like 4.05.1). Then go to the manufacturer's website and look for "Upgrades," "Downloads" or something similar and compare your software's version number to the upgrade versions available. If the numbers to the right of the first decimal point are higher than yours, download and install the patch. But, if the integer (number to the left of the first decimal point) is higher, you will need to upgrade to a newer version of the program.⁷

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Tyburski, Genie. "What People Say About the Virtual Chase." The Virtual Chase. 26 May 2004. Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP. 2 September 2004. <http://www.virtualchase.com/accolades.html>.
- ²⁻⁴ Na, Christian. "VoIP: Voice Over Internet Protocol - VoIP for Lawyers." Law Practice Today. June 2004. American Bar Association. 2 September 2004. <http://www.abanet.org/lpm/lpt/articles/ptr06041.html>.
- ^{5&7} Crispin, Patrick Douglas. " Exploits and Patch Management." The Internet Tourbus. Volume 10, Number 2. 24 July 2004. Rankin & Crispin. <http://listserv.aol.com/cgi-bin/wa?A2=ind0407d&L=tourbus&T=0&F=&S=&P=61>
- ⁶ "User Reports Damage Done by AdwareSpy False Positives." Spyware Warrior: Waging the War Against Spyware. 27 August 2004. <http://netrn.net/spywareblog/archives/2004/08/27/>

By Nancy Stinson, MLS
nancy@starklawlibrary.org